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Recreation Commission Minutes 11/10/2009

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, November 10, 2009

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, November 10, 2009.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Jen Rothenberg, Jim Robillard, Nancy Campbell and Don Vitters. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

Members of the public included: Dave Cunningham Facility Supervisor, Oakes Plimpton, Elizabeth Carr-Jones, Dick Harmer and Mustafa Varoglu

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the October 13, 2009 minute as amended seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 3-0-2 with Mr. Robillard and Ms. Campbell abstaining.

Gift Request from Dick Rubinstein

Mr. Connelly presented the request from Dick Rubinstein for a dedicated bench at Spy Pond for Eric Kurtz. Mr. Rubinstein requested that in accordance with the new "Gifts for Parks Donation Policy" the Town accept a \$9,000 donation for three consecutive 8-year terms. Mr. Rubinstein in his October 15, 2009 letter also stated they would like to make a donation of \$2,000 for general Spy Pond maintenance. This donation would be accepted for use at Spy Pond through the Friends of Parks Fund.

The Commission reviewed the request. Mr. Robillard asked if we should know more about Mr. Kurtz. Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer reminded the Commission that when we adopted the new policy we discussed not evaluating who the donation was for but rather just accepting the gift if the gift was appropriate.

Mr. Connelly will meet with Mr. Rubinstein at the site to receive feedback on possible locations and recommend language for the plaque.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to accept the gift in accordance with our new gift policy and for the final location of the bench and plaque language to be reviewed and approved at a later date. The motion was seconded by Ms. Campbell and was approved 5-0.

Fencing at Hurd

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer described the situation at Hurd Field which they believe results in a safety concern. Mr. Connelly explained that the pedestrian and bicycle traffic cutting across the field from the Reservoir to the Bike Path has worn a dangerous trench in the middle of the soccer fields and baseball fields. Mr. Connelly stated that the Arlington Soccer Club has brought this to his attention.

Mr. Connelly stated that the Department of Public works filled in the trench with loam and seeded the area. DPW also placed a temporary fence closing the access to and from the bike path. Ms. Mayer stated that access to the bike path was only about 100' feet from the closed entrance and was actually more direct from the Reservoir.

The Commission discussed placing appropriate signage on both sides of the fence to give direction as to the new access locations. Concerns were raised about vandalism that is common in this area, and Ms. Rothenberg suggested that the fence be a heavy gauge to help deter its destruction.

Mr. Robillard motioned to approve the permanent fence with appropriate signage, seconded by Ms. Campbell and approved 5-0.

Review of Arlington Sport Center Rink Improvement Project

Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Connelly reviewed some of the progress with the renovation plans to the Sport Center. Mr. Connelly stated that the Sport Center Improvement Committee did meet and the plans were reviewed with several members.

Mr. Cunningham reviewed the findings regarding the placement of the team benches and new location of the penalty boxes and scorer's table. Mr. Connelly stated that some of the concerns would be dealt with by implementing proper contest management procedures.

Mr. Connelly stated that in following the Sasaki Master Plan the header trench could be altered at a future date without impacting a majority of the bed. Mr. Connelly did state that this process would have an expense attached to it that would have to be included as part of any mechanical room move.

Ms. Mayer questioned the need for exit doors from the penalty boxes to the rink aisles and stated that she felt strongly that any exit out of or into a penalty box, except onto the ice, is not a good idea. Ms. Mayer would also like to see a second public access door on the other side of the penalty boxes, instead of an exit through the penalty box. Mr. Cunningham stated that industry standard recommended the least number of doors to and from the ice for maintenance purposes. Mr. Connelly will discuss with Mr. McLaughlin to see if there is any significant pricing difference from including the other door and removing the penalty box door to the aisle.

Mr. Vitters stated that his research indicated that mandatory sub bids would be necessary for the roofing and dehumidification portions of the renovation. Mr. Vitters explained that certain work estimated to be over \$25,000 needed to follow this process. Mr. Connelly will follow up with town purchasing agent.

Mr. Cunningham described a proposal to include a pro shop at the rink to assist in raising additional revenue. The Commission would like to see a drawing of how the lobby would be reconfigured. Ms. Mayer wants to be sure that any work that was done be in accordance to the approved master plan – which calls for the eventual relocation of the entrance/lobby. Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Connelly will draft a schematic.

Mr. Cunningham also reviewed some information regarding new mats in the lobby and aisle areas of the rink. Mr. Cunningham and Ms. Mayer also discussed the need for matting over the new rink bed, which Ms. Mayer felt would be the priority for funding.

Special Event Approvals

Lucinda Brandt – Thursday, November 26 – Arlington Reservoir – AHS Alumni Cross Country Race
Ms. Campbell motion to approve, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 5-0.

Capital Improvement Update

Thorndike Parking – Mr. Connelly stated that the project was slated to be bid in early winter for a spring/summer build.

Summer Street Playground – Mr. Connelly reviewed the public hearings and reviewed the preliminary plans by Warner and Larson Associates. Mr. Connelly explained that a more detailed design would be presented at the December meeting for approval.

Summer Street Fencing and Pavement Removal – Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer stated that Mr. Bean did send a note to the State for action. Mr. Connelly reviewed his site visit with the Town Manager.

Spy Pond Playground Surfacing – Mr. Connelly stated that the project was now complete.

North Union Basketball Court – Mr. Connelly stated that the Town Manager has asked that this project be on hold until some more information is available for the Thompson School renovation project.

Request for additional playground fencing for Magnolia and Parallel – Mr. Connelly reviewed the requests. The Commission discussed their concerns. Mr. Connelly reminded the Commission that this issue came up within the last year at Robbins Farm playground as well. Ms. Mayer and Mr. Connelly stated that these requests seem to be illustrating a change in public thinking in playground design – though there are many in the community that advocate for minimal fencing in parks, as evidenced by recent public meetings/debates related to dog parks. Mr. Connelly asked the Commission to review both sites and send him their feedback.

Rink and Recreation Update

Adult Softball – Mr. Connelly quickly shared with the Commission that the organization and direct supervision of the town adult softball spring/summer league would be relinquished by the Recreation Department and turned over to a private organization. Mr. Connelly stated that this organizational change would result in greater revenue to the department as well as a better situation for the league itself.

Robbins Farm Community/Educational Garden Project

Mr. Connelly reviewed their previous meeting with members of the garden project. Mr. Connelly stated that members of the group and he did meet to discuss how the program would work within the structure of the Recreation Department. The Commission discussed how the program would be set-up. Mr. Connelly stated that issues outstanding included how the budget would be set-up and how water would be brought to the site. The Commission discussed the options regarding both issues. Mr. Connelly stated that he felt strongly that any revenues and expenses be handled directly through the Recreation Department if they were going to sponsor the program.

Ms. Jones reviewed the three water options;

- Permanent water line
- Temporary water line
- Rain barrels

The Commission reviewed and discussed the three different options. The Commission asked Mr. Connelly to get some recommendations from the Town Engineer.

Mr. Plimpton discussed the type of fence to be used. Mr. Vitters stated that he would like to see a split rail fence that would be attractive and sturdy. The Commission and the garden project representatives discussed the possible types of fencing. Ms. Jones stated that their group would do some background work of the types of fencing and report back to Mr. Connelly. The Commission asked for input from DPW's Jim Dodge.

Ms. Mayer asked when the group would like to get started. Mr. Harmer stated that they would really need to begin meeting in February to start the planning and purchasing of the seeds. Mr. Connelly stated that he would like to get something in the winter brochure stating that this program was going to be offered through the Town.

The Commission asked the group to gather more information on the fencing and Mr. Connelly to gather more information on the potential water supply. The Commission felt that, at this time, it could be supportive of the concept and direction presented, but

needs resolution of the outstanding items prior to full approval. It was suggested that Mr. Connelly put an announcement of the Community/Educational Garden Project in the winter brochure with specific details TBA.

Park Policies

Ms. Mayer asked that the storage shed policy and amplification usage be discussed with the Field users at their February annual meeting so that the Commission can create or modify policies in time for spring.

Committee Updates

N/A

Other

The Commission discussed the response of Mr. Miller to the letter sent regarding the trees planted in Menotomy Rocks Park without approval. Mr. Miller was invited to attend the Commission meeting, but was out of town. The Commission requested Mr. Connelly to follow-up with the Tree Warden to determine the specific species of birches planted and to get his recommendation as to whether they are properly placed.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation